1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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584 in the same district, the background of the young man is well enough known so that no investigation is necessary, though unfailingly a long and formal discussion of the suitor, his qualities, and his prospects ensues. If his home is some distance away, however, meticulous inquiries are made not only concerning the young man and his immediate family, but of
584 his ancestry as well. Should the suitor live near the home of
212 the young woman, as usually happens, his own parents come with a *lettre de demand*. In earlier days the "letter" was written on flowered paper with a lacy border, but today plain
[603] colored paper does very well. When presented, it is wrapped
[822] in a green silk handkerchief, "for hope" — the handkerchief costs about five gourdes, and a similar amount is given the scribe — and is usually carried by the oldest man of the family; that is to say, the paternal grandfather if living, or if he is dead, the father, accompanied by the mother and per-
[178] haps the other grandparents. Today it is said that in the valley of Mirebalais the custom of presenting these letters of request is often disregarded, but is by no means extinct.[1]

The family of the girl is always apprised of the exact time of the visit, and refreshments are on hand. No reply is given at the time of the delivery of the "letter," since the families of both the father and the mother of the girl must consent to the match before it can be finally approved. However, at the stage of the courtship which the presentation of a "letter" implies, this delayed answer is a matter of form, for if the proposal had not been acceptable, the girl would not have
[578] been allowed to see the suitor. The refusal of a "letter" has been known to occur, but this is regarded as a deadly insult, and deep enmity between the families follows. Should the family of the girl, not wishing to be abrupt, accept the "letter" and proffer refreshments to its bearers, but later return the same "letter" as a sign of rejection, even this would be
584 bitterly resented. Under such circumstances the young man
832 takes steps to obtain revenge by providing himself with a
578

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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love-charm designed to insure the young girl's coming to him. He then uses all persuasion to give her a child and, this achieved, abandons her to show his contempt for the family that has formally refused to accept him as a son-in-law.

Usually, however, the visit is returned by the family of the girl, bearing a "response" of acceptance wrapped in a red silk handkerchief, "for victory." And just as the family of the young woman had known in advance of the coming of her suitor's relatives, word of the favorable verdict is now sent through indirect channels, so that the family of the young man may also be prepared to receive the emissaries who come on behalf of the girl.

With this formal acceptance of the young man's suit, the wedding waits until he has accumulated the requisites for a household. Custom dictates that even should he be prepared, the ceremony must be delayed for several months while he remains in a probationary state, to assure the family of his fiancée of his worthiness. The young woman is also under surveillance during this time, when she may be asked to help her future mother-in-law with the housework, and particularly with the washing and ironing of linens. Generally a period of from two to three years elapses before the bridegroom accumulates enough to fulfill his obligations in marriage. During this time the family of the young woman is acquiring the things she is expected to bring to her husband: linens and dishes — though in the poorer peasant families these items would not be provided her — cooking utensils, water-containers, knives, forks, and other things needed for the household. Her father also presents her with a horse, a donkey, six or seven pigs, the same number of goats, as well as chickens, guinea-hens, and turkeys.

Tokens of virginity are not demanded before the match, since Mirebalais custom requires that the girl tell before her marriage whether she has had relations with other men. She may be sent away if it is discovered that she has told an un-

1: Herskovits E-4, 8 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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are necessary, and the elders of the family must see to it that these gods are instructed not to trouble the newly married pair. If either or both of them are devotees of deities such as Damballa, Erzilie, Ogun, or Aida Wedo, all of whom are known to be extremely jealous, these gods must be specially placated. 585 782 776

For the actual ceremony the couple appear each with a candle in hand, pour water on the ground in the family house of worship, and kneel and pray. The god may "come to the head" of the girl or the man or some relative of each and advise them. If it asks a gift at this time, it is either given at the moment or a promise is made to fulfill the request later. If the spirit objects to the marriage, it is wooed with offerings. Thus, for example, should the young woman be possessed by the serpent-god Damballa, who, speaking through his devotee, registered an objection to the marriage, the girl would be given such gifts as a white silk dress, white silk stockings, or some other valued object in the sacred color of the god, or some perfume which might also serve to mollify him. Or should the man's deity who registered objection be Ogun, the god of war, a fine red kerchief might be offered in honor of this god, whose color is red.[8] 585 782 787 [822]

The dead of both families are also notified by means of a visit to the cemetery. The days for these pilgrimages are Mondays or Fridays, and the pilgrimages must be made during either the morning or the early afternoon, since visits at night are only for evil purposes. As candles are lighted, announcement is made to the family dead of the marriage which is soon to take place, and their good offices are asked to bring it happiness. After all the family dead have been invoked, a candle is lighted before the large cross for Baron Samedi, and another behind it for Gede, the first as the ruler of cemeteries and the graves of the dead, and the second as his handy-man. Another candle is lighted for the "abandoned souls" of the family, who have died without consecration, and yet another 585 769 782 [776]

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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the one possessed, possessions of this kind mean either that the *loa* needs baptism; or that, being baptized, its devotee has been negligent in serving the god.

No actual rite of baptism of a *loa* — or, as it is also termed, of *lavé tête*, "washing the head" — was witnessed, but the account of the ceremony given here, obtained independently from several persons, represents an adequate exposition of the rite as performed in Mirebalais. A room is prepared where the person whose *loa* is to be baptized must remain for three days. The mat or bed on which the neophyte rests is covered with fresh sheets and pillow-cases, and three changes of clothing are made ready, one of which must be entirely new for the last day of the ceremony. These are in the color of the god being "baptized"; that is, if the *loa* were revealed to be such a one as Damballa, Aida Wedo, or Gran' Erzilie, everything would be white, but if it were Gran' Siligbo, the colors would be blue and white; if Ogun, everything would be red; if Ossange, blue; where the god is one of the Pétro suite, such as 'Ti Kita or Bosu, everything would be black.*

During the three days' "retreat" the one whose *loa* is being consecrated lies alone. All day long the men and women of the family sit in the next room or outside the house, singing and praying, though at night they sleep, since "this is not a wake." They not only sing the songs sacred to the *loa* being baptized, but also the canticles of the Virgin, while prayers of the Church are recited under the leadership of the *prêt' savanne*, the "bush-priest" whose ability to read the prayers makes him an essential figure in all *vodun* rites. They may from time to time have "a little procession" about the room where the novitiate lies, when small banners in the color of the god are carried. Soft drinks and a *mangé sec* — a "dry" offering — are given the god, and white tapers and an oil lamp are

* A detailed listing of the names, attributes, and powers of the more widely worshipped *loa*, the colors, days, and trees or other places sacred to them, and the "squads" into which they are conceived to be formed, will be found in an appendix at the end of this book.

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78 a black powder of ground, roasted coffee beans. Starting at the
793 tree near the "first" table for Bosu, he traced a white line
796 that, passing the second table and the trees for Simbi, con-
532 tinued to the *trône*, to which subsidiary motifs were then added in gray and black, making of the designs an intricate geometric composition.

78 With bell in hand and a small whistle in his mouth, both of
79 which later were entrusted to his assistants, the *hungan* went about, blowing the whistle at intervals to call the *loa*. Singing,
[533] he directed that a wooden boat-shaped basin containing water be placed in front and a little to the left of the *trône* for washing the feet of the sacrificial animals. Though all the family were present, they were again ritually summoned in song to come with the sacrifices and were ordered to stand near by with lighted candles while the animals were bathed. As they gathered, the *hungan* became possessed by Simbi, who took it upon himself to set the fee for conducting this ceremony at 117.10 gourdes. When he announced this sum, loud pleas of poverty were heard from the family, while speaking through the priest, the god bargained with them until the sum of 110 gourdes was finally agreed upon.

[533] The *hungan* now sang a long invocation, inviting the gods of all those places where Africans live to come. First the feet of the fowl were washed, then those of the pigs, and finally of the goat. Each fowl was passed over the body and head of every
● [822] member of the family as it was presented with the requisite song to the proper *loa* — the red and black cock for Legba, the black fowl for Gede, the red one for Ogun, the white for Damballa, and the fowl with ruffled plumage for Congo Zandor. Then each was placed on the ground in front of three small piles of food taken from the *trône*. They were watched with anxiety by all present, for the pecking at the food is a signal that the god accepts the animal given him. The small pigs for 'Ti Kita Demembré, and the boar for Bosu, were offered the same food as the fowls; the goat for Erzilie Gé Rouge was pre-

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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gatory on those who are possessed by *loa* who go unharmed in fire, it is said: " It is the *loa* that go into the fire. The soul is another thing."

All agree that the dead do not possess folk in the manner of the *loa*, as might be expected from the fact that the most important rituals in the cult of the dead are not only dominated by the Church, but carried out by its priest. In the matter of consulting the dead when questions of importance for the family are involved, however, there is no consensus of opinion. The most widespread point of view holds that only those dead whose *loa* have not been removed from their heads can be summoned, and that this is done only to permit them to " go to God," so their souls may be at rest. Otherwise, " when the dead are called, it is a matter of magic, for the dead are never good and one always must fear them." And though a Mait' 'Bitation that is an old, old ancestor may " mount the head " of a member of the family, he would never be specially called and in most cases, if he did come, would be " restrained." On the other hand, it was recounted how during the Caco rebellion the soul of Dessalines was brought into a jar and asked for his counsel. It is said, however, that he was so angered at the consistent defeats sustained by the Haitians that he struck everyone to earth and roundly scolded them for having lost the liberty with which he endowed them, departing without giving the desired advice. And since the spirits of Christophe and Toussaint are believed to be even stronger, no one had sufficient courage to summon them!

The immediate nature of the relation between the dead and the living is best seen in the conventions and attitudes surrounding the wearing of mourning, which is required of all children of the deceased, whether " legitimate " or otherwise. Black is worn twelve months for a father, eighteen months for a mother; and half-mourning — black and white — is worn for a sister, brother, cousin, uncle, or aunt. In the country, before full mourning is put on, the black cloth is

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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as a limping old man, clad in tatters, but in his several manifestations has more specific characteristics. Thus Legba Pié Cassé is described as having paralyzed legs, with arms held stiff and crooked before him, and Legba Avardra is spoken of as a *vagabond* who continually wanders the principal highways. Legba must first be summoned before any ceremony may begin, and when it was asked how Legba could be expected to come when called simultaneously to three or four or twenty or fifty places, the parallel given was that of the multiple manifestations of which God or Christ or a saint is capable. Legba, identified with St. Anthony, has Tuesday as his sacred day, and the plum tree is reserved for him. He "eats" a varicolored type of cock known as *poule zinga*, marked like a guinea-fowl, and in this differs from other gods who must indicate through a possessed devotee or a diviner what specific offering among the things they favor is wanted on the occasion of each sacrifice. Though in southern Haiti the smallest chick from each hatching is reserved for Legba, and at least once during his lifetime a man puts aside a bullock or a male goat as a sacrifice for this god, these customs do not prevail in Mirebalais. Here, when an offering to the gods is in prospect, Legba is included among the *loa* to whom a certain animal is promised, and, as in the case of other deities, this animal is thereafter under his protection. But this is the nearest approach to any special offerings for this god.

Damballa, an important Rada god whose symbol is the serpent, is said to bring rain because they sing "*Damballa ian l'eau*—Damballa in the water." The sacred color of this deity, worn by devotees under possession, is white, and the full initiates wear white necklaces as well as white clothing. This god, identified with St. Patrick, is especially worshipped on Thursdays, and shares the white fig tree with Erzilie and Gran' Siligbo. Damballa "eats" sacrifices of white chickens and pigeons, rice, milk, eggs, pineapples, and fig-bananas; and "drinks" *kola* and sweetened coffee. Damballa forms the

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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rainbow, and this is called an *arc d'alliance* between him and Aida Wedo, his wife, whose characteristic dress is blue and white. Sobo, who in Dahomey is the god of thunder, is also believed in Haiti to give thunder, though he is not thought to live in the sky. As in Africa, his symbol is the ram. Aizan lives in the water, and is a favored deity because he gives his devotees the power of healing and of divining.

Erzilie, a *loa* of considerable importance, is envisaged as a pale, trembling woman who also inhabits the water. She constantly changes her dresses, of which she has many. All agree that she is a fabulously wealthy woman, who wears golden chains about her neck and has many rings, a characterization derived from her identification with Mater Dolorosa, whose chromolithographs depict her with many rich ornaments. As a Rada *loa* she "eats" the same food as Damballa, and wears white, like this other god, but has Friday as her sacred day. In her less pleasant manifestation of Erzilie Gé Rouge, the red-eyed one, she is a member of the Pétro "squad," and is held to be the wife of Simbi d'l'eau, with whom she is believed to get on especially well, since they "eat" different foods. Simbi, who is worshipped on Tuesdays and inhabits the mango and calabash trees, is said to drink heavily, however, and occasionally becomes so boistrous in his cups that he destroys the furniture and otherwise makes himself so objectionable that Erzilie is forced to leave him until he becomes sober.

Ogun, in Haiti as in Nigeria, is the god of war. The Nigerian Shango is also found, though the Haitians conceive Shango as a *loa* who acts as the servant of the Ogun deities, particularly Ogun Badagri and Ogun Batala. Ogun "eats" red cocks and red beans mixed with rice, and his color, red, is worn by his devotees. To this fact may be referred the custom of the Caco warriors who fought against the American Marines in 1918–20 to wear red as their distinguishing color, something referred to by Wirkus (pp. 22 ff.), though he

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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776 823 it joins the flooded Artibonite as its master accompanies Clairmé on his way to consult with the great ruler of the sea, Agwe. Actually, at the height of the rainy season the force of the light colored muddy water of the major stream holds back the darker colored flow of its tributaries in a manner which accords with the legend, so that, observing the Tombe River at one such time, the Haitians who were present said: "The Tombe is waiting for its master to pass."

776 [784] [794] Gede, a deity who figures in both the Rada and the Pétro groups as chief functionary under Baron Samedi, ruler of cemeteries, is tolerated rather than favored, though his rewards to his devotees include the refusal to dig a premature grave for them. When Gede possesses a devotee at a dance, [781] Damballa, Ogun, and the other Rada gods "leave" at once, and those who are possessed by them come out of their possessions. For though Gede is no less a *loa* than other gods, "He is a *zombi* and is fed apart"; as the Haitians say: "The *loa* are like human beings. They will not mingle with the dead, [822] and Gede is of the dead." His color is black, and Saturday is his sacred day. He "eats" salt herring, hot peppers, cassava, [782] roasted corn, roasted bananas, and other roasted foods. He drinks *clairin* — much of it — and at great ceremonies a [825] black goat and chickens are killed for him, as well as those chickens with ruffled feathers called *djakati*, which in all the New World, as in Africa, are believed to discover and dig up magic charms set against their owners. He lives in the cemetery, "behind the cross." There are a number of deities whose names are compounded with the name of Gede — Gedenibo, Gedeonsu, Gedehun — and hence the question whether or not this is a generic term or a specific designation is pertinent. There is no agreement on this point, and it could only be established that those *loa* who bear the same name, such as all Ogun or Bosu or Simbi deities, are brothers; but who the parents of these groups may have been is not known.

Associated with Simbi and Gede in the Pétro "squad" are

a "nation" in the Dahomé rites; and the Ibo group, though still distinct, is frequently allied with the Dahomé rites or the Guinée rites.

The following list does not pretend to include all the loa known in Haiti. It is doubtful that a complete list could ever be compiled, in view of the continual generation of new deities and the constant cross-fertilization between "nations." The loa are grouped here according to most widespread usage. There are contradictions from which there is no possible escape, and these general groupings will not necessarily correspond to the concepts and practices of any specific locality. It is intended here to give a broad and generalized view.

Under "The Vodoun Pantheon" I have placed constellations of deities of Dahomean and Yoruban origin, along with others that are clearly identified with Vodoun rites. Under "The Congo and Pétro Pantheons" I have listed the Congo-Guinée loa—consisting mainly of deities associated with Central Africa and deities affiliated with the Pétro rites. Ibo and Kanga loa are grouped together, because in many regions of Haiti the two pantheons appear to be interlocked. A separate listing is given for the Simbi family of water deities in view of their ambivalence; they are sometimes found in the Pétro group and sometimes in the Dahomé, according to local practice.

THE VODOUN PANTHEON

Damballa Wèdo, or Dan Wèdo. One of the most venerable of Haitian loa. He is generally recognized as the husband of Ayida Wèdo, though occasionally the two deities are merged in a personality called Damballa-Ayida. The concept of a single identity for Damballa and Ayida conforms to Dahomean belief. In both Haiti and West Africa, Damballa is identified with the rainbow and is symbolized as a snake.[1] In Haiti he is associated also with rainfall, springs, and fertility. He is sometimes described as "white," and the proper food offering to him is a white chicken. Persons possessed by Damballa usually take on stylized characteristics of snakes. Along with many other important loa, he has become identified with characters in Christian religious belief. There are, in fact, "two" Damballa Wèdos. One, identified with Moses, comes in talking; the other, identified with St. Patrick, never talks. Food offerings for the St. Patrick version of Damballa consist of eggs, flour, sugar, and almond syrup. Damballa remains one of the chief gods of the Dahomey cult in Cuba, and he survived into the last century in New Orleans under the name Danny.

Ayida Wèdo. Generally regarded in Haiti as the wife of Damballa, Ayida is also symbolized by snake and rainbow, and her color, like Damballa's, is "white." In Dahomey and Nigeria, Ayida is known as a male rather than a female spirit and is regarded there as the same divinity as Damballa, or Dji. In Dahomey, Ayida Wèdo was the great serpent who held up the world. According to one myth, the Creator of the World assigned to Ayida the task of holding up the earth to keep it from falling into the sea. The great serpent coiled himself, tail in mouth, and lay below

[1] [Herskovits, Dahomey, II, 245 ff. Cf. p. 354, category 116. --Analyst]

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

the earth like the carrying pad that women wear to support bundles on their heads. Whenever Ayida Wèdo shifted his position there were earthquakes.[2] When the rainbow appeared after a rain it was said that Ayida had come out from under the earth to drink of the fresh water.

Damballa Grand Chimin (Damballa of the Highway). Another manifestation of Damballa as a protector of those on long journeys.

Damballa Verre. Another manifestation of Damballa.

Domici Wèdo. Considered to be the daughter of Damballa. The ending of her name (*-ci*) suggests that at one time she may have been considered a wife rather than a daughter.

Doki Wèdo. A member of Damballa's family.

Agão Wèdo. A member of Damballa's family. Said to be a "work loa" who aids men with their gardens, especially in time of illness.

Ézilie Doba, or Dooba, sometimes spelled Ezulie. One of the "big" loa of the Dahomé pantheon, a symbol of purity, and sometimes identified with the Virgin Mary. Her color is white, and services to her include a ritual sweeping and sprinkling of the earth and a perfuming of the air. Food offerings to her include corn meal and eggs. Male "horses" of Ézilie are sometimes bound to her by mystic marriages, and they are obligated to refrain from sexual intercourse on certain days which belong to her. There are a number of Ézilies, regarded as members of the same family or, in some cult centers, as different manifestations of the same deity. Some Haitians regard Ézilie Doba as the ancestor of the Ézilie family and refer to her as Grand Ézilie. Note that there is a Dahomean town named Dogba at approximately 0° 6′ E., 6° 50′ N.

Ézilie Fréda, or Ézilie Dahomain (Dahomé), or Ézilie Fréda Dahomain. Like Ézilie Doba, she is a symbol of purity and is identified with the Virgin Mary. Mystic marriages are performed with her, and her "horses" are obligated to refrain from sexual intercourse on certain days. She is also a giver of wealth.

Ézilie Wèdo. A sister or daughter of Ézilie Doba and also related to Damballa.

Ézilie Maisol. A sister of Ézilie Fréda.

Ézilie Banda. A manifestation of Ézilie who is especially fond of the Banda dance.

Ézilie Jérouge (Red Eyes). A stern and hard Ézilie who is often identified with Pétro rather than Dahomé rites.

Aïson Fréda. A member of the Ézilie escorte, regarded as a market-place protector. In Dahomey, Aïson was a protector of all public gathering places.[3]

Aïson Balénété

Aïson Delau Bolo Bosu

Maîtresse Mambo. A special form of Ézilie as priestess.

Maîtresse Espagnole, or 'Pagnole. A person mounted by this Ézilie talks only Spanish.

Sobo, or Sooso. A thunder deity who hurls stones to the earth when angered. Some of the stones thrown by Sobo are regarded as the sacred residence of various loa. Sobo (or Sogbo) is a member of the original Thunder pantheon of Dahomey.

Sobo Badé, or Sobo Badé, or simply Badé. A close relative of Sobo, regarded as the protector of the hounfor (*badé*). In Dahomey, Badé is sometimes referred to as the son of the deity Sobo.[4]

[2] [See Ellis, The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa, pp. 47-49; and Herskovits, Dahomey, II, 245ff. Cf. P. 354 Category 116. -- Analyst]

[3] [Ellis, op. cit., p. 52. Cf. P. 354, Category 116. -- Analyst]

[4] [Herskovits, op. cit., pp. 152ff. Cf. P. 354, Cat. 116. -- Analyst]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

776 AGOMÉ TONNERE, also pronounced ABOMÉ TONNERE. Another thunder loa. Abomé (or Agbomé) is the name of an ancient capital of Dahomey.

BADI SI. The wife of Sobo Badé.

[171] SO NARCISSE, also called Sogo Narcisse, or simply So. A thunder loa of Dahomean origin. In Dahomey he is regarded as an offspring of Mawu and Lisa, and a member of the Sky pantheon.

[171] [966] KÉBIOSU, or KÉBIOSO. A thunder loa who, like Sobo, hurls stones to the earth. In Dahomey he is known as Xevioso and is thought to be the same deity as So. In Haiti, persons killed by lightning are thought to be enemies of Kébiosu and are given special treatment in burial.

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776 787 [821] [822] AGWÉ WOYO, known also as COQUI-NAN-MER. He is a loa of the sea; thunder and lightning over the ocean are thought to be Agwé shooting his cannon. He is usually symbolized in pictures by a sailing or steam vessel. His colors are blue and white, and the primary sacrificial animal for him is a male goat. High ceremonies for Agwé are begun in the hounfor and consummated in a sailing boat on the open sea, from which is launched a highly decorated and stylized miniature ship containing food for the deity. This tiny craft is known as the *barque d'Agwé*. Hounfors honoring this spirit usually have a small boat hanging from the rafters. In Dahomey, [171] Agwé is also a sea deity and a member of the Thunder pantheon.

776 [171] AGWÉTTA WOYO. She is thought to be Agwé Woyo's wife, though in Dahomey she was considered to be his daughter.

AGWÉSU WANDÉOU. Said to be the son of Agwé.

LA SIRÈNE. Another deity of the sea, a latecomer visualized as a mermaid. La Sirène is usually thought of as belonging to a separate family, though she is frequently served along with Agwé. Some sociétés do not recognize her at all.

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776 171 NANANBOUCLOU, or NANAN BOULOUCOU. A loa of herbs and medicines. In Dahomey this spirit was considered the grandparent of all deities, the progenitor of Mawu and Lisa from whom all demigods are descended.[5 A] She is still remembered in the Dahomey cults of Cuba.

LISSA or LISHA. Probably the Lisa of Dahomey, child of Nanbouclou.

ATTIBON LEGBA, or LEGBA SÉ. One of the most important of Haitian loa, frequently the first one invoked in any service. He is the guardian of the gateway, the [982] crossroads, and the highway. Cocks and male goats are his favorite foods, as in West Africa. In Dahomean tradition, Legba is the youngest offspring of Mawu and Lisa, the progenitors of all Dahomean deities. He is a divine trickster who is both feared [998] and loved, a force that is capriciously malevolent or benevolent. Today, as in earlier times in Dahomey, the image of Legba, made of clay, stands or sits before the entrance to many villages. Sometimes the image is nothing more than a mound or column of earth symbolizing a phallus. Legba's mischief and tricks are directed against the other deities and human beings. In Haiti, as in Dahomey, Legba is not a personal deity. As Herskovits points out, Legba has no "character" and cannot be [989] relied on. He is the intervener between mankind and the deities. It is in this sense that he "opens the gate," providing a channel of communication between man and loa; and it is for this reason that he is often supplicated first in religious ritual. In Dahomean lore, Legba's mischief is often in the realm of sex. In ritual dances for

5 A [Ibid, pp. 101 ff. Cf. p. 354, Category 116. --Analyst]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

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Legba in Dahomey, the performers hold a carved phallus between their legs and perform copulating movements. The Haitian Legba is depicted as an aged limping loa, and the carved phallus has become a grotesque crutch-cane that fits into the crotch of the legs. The Dahomean Legba is remembered elsewhere in the New World, notably in Dutch Guiana, Brazil, and Cuba. Until relatively recent times he was known among the Negroes of Louisiana by the name Papa Lebat.[1]

Legba Grand Chimin (Legba of the Highway). A special manifestation of Legba who guards the highway.

Legba Kalfu (Legba of the Crossroads). A special manifestation of Legba who guards the crossroads.

Legba Maît' 'Bitation (Legba Master of the Household). The Legba who protects the house and its grounds.

Legba Lafleurondé. One of the Legba family.

Legba Kévé. One of the Legba family.

Legba Aguator. Said to be a "Nago" deity.

Attibon Kéké. One of the Legba family.

Attibon Samardi. One of the Legba family.

Azomblo Kidi. One of the Legba family.

Ogoun Feraille, often referred to as Maît' Ogoun. The chief and ancestor of a large family of loa whose activities have to do with blacksmithing and war, which are closely related. Ogoun Feraille is a patron of warriors and the forge; his symbol is a piece of forged iron, such as a machete, a hoe blade, a saber, or a piece of iron chain. In West Africa, Ogoun is considered a patron of hunters as well.[2] He was widely known by various peoples in Dahomey and Nigeria. In Dahomey he was considered a child of the divine Mawu and Lisa,[3] and among the Yoruba of Nigeria he was regarded as a brother of Chango and Dada,[4] two spirits who survive in the Haitian pantheon. An altar to Ogoun Feraille, like that of the loa Chango, may consist of a pile of iron scrap, perhaps a broken sugar vat. In Cuba, Ogoun Feraille is a prominent deity in both the Arara (Dahomey) and the Lucumí (Yoruba) cults. Although absorbed exclusively into the Dahomé family of rites in Haiti, Ogoun Feraille and his entire family and escorte are designated as belonging to the Nago "nation." Their color, like that of heated iron, is red. Ogoun Feraille survived until recent times in Louisiana as Joe Feraille.[5]

Ogoun Fer (Ogoun Iron). He is sometimes called Ogoun St. Jacques, St. Jacques Majeur, or simply St. Jacques, being identified with the saint of that name.

Ogoun Mashoquette (Ogoun Blacksmith).

Ogoun Balala. One of the Ogoun brothers.

Ogoun Baltaza Misho. One of the Ogoun brothers.

Ogoun Jénison, or Jérison. One of the Ogoun brothers.

Ogoun Badagry, or Batagri. Said to be a "grandson" of Maît' Ogoun. He is a "work" loa, as well as an ironworker and a warrior, and helps in the fields, especially in time of sickness. Badagry is the name of a town near the mouth of the Ogoun River in western Nigeria. According to a priest of the Cuban Dahomé cult, the word *batagri* was used to designate the circumcision house in Dahomey. Ogoun Badagry thus may have been associated with that shrine.

Chango, or Ogoun Chango. A member of the Ogoun family and, like most of his brothers, a warrior and ironworker. Chango's altar is usually a pile of scrap iron, or

1 [Ibid, pp. 201ff. Cf. p. 354, Category 116. -- Analyst]
2 [Ellis, The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa, p. 60. Cf. p. 354, Category 116. -- Analyst]
3 [Herskovits, Op. Cit., pp. 105ff. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116. -- Analyst]
4 [Ellis, The Yoruba-speaking Peoples, pp. 45, 60ff. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116. -- Analyst]
5 [Library of Congress Recording, No. 101. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116. -- Analyst]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

Maît' Grand Chimin (Master of the Highway). Probably Legba. [176 175]

Makanda. Believed to be the spirit of the famous houngan Makandal, who lived during the revolutionary period. He is symbolized as a snake which lives in the ground. Some informants think he is a Pétro rather than a Dahomé loa.

Masino Çaça

Tijean Danton (Ancient Tijean)

Wittdah Walo. Whydah is the name of a seacoast town in Dahomey.

Zo. A fire deity of clear Dahomean origin.[22]

Olechia

Oraé, or Oranor. Known also among the Lucumí cults of Cuba. May be any one of the Orangers mentioned by Herskovits. [171]

Oranor Léléí

Ochojabé

Papa Dahomé

Pierre Baisico. This loa is sometimes identified with St. Peter. [177]

Pierre Damballa, Dambarra, or Dambada. Sometimes identified with St. Peter.

Pierre Walo. Related to Whydah Walo.

Poula, or Foula. This name is probably a tribal designation.

Sabata. Described as a loa of ancient times. Sabata or Sagbata is the so-called smallpox group of deities of Dahomey.

Sina. A female deity, thought by some to belong to the Ezilie Fréda family.

Silibo Gwèto. In Dahomey, according to Herskovits, Silibo is an ancient sib-founder. [171]

Silimja

Taureau

Ti Crab. This is a "false name"; this loa keeps his real name a secret.

THE AMBIVALENT SIMBI FAMILY

This group of loa in certain regions has attached itself to the Vodoun pantheon, elsewhere to the Congo-Guinée pantheon; but it has not maintained any kind of independent or semi-independent status. The deity Simbi and his family are of Congo origin. [171]

Simba. A male deity, patron of rain and drinking water. Said to be the father of the Simbi brothers.

Simbi Dleau. The best known of the Simbi family. Like his father, he is the patron of fresh water, is associated with the spring, and usually is symbolized as a snake. The color sacred to him is white. Altars to Simbi Dleau usually are found at the spring or the well. Sometimes ponds are constructed for him within the houmfor. [823 822 178]

Simbi Kitta

Simbi Yewodo, or Simbi Nan Dé Zeaux (Simbi in Two Waters). Symbolized as a water snake who lives in the "upper" waters and the "lower" waters.

Grand Simba. The parent of Simbis, and ancestor of the entire family of water loa.

Simbi Trois Zilé (Simbi of Three Islands)

Simbi Macaya

Simbi Grand Bois (Simbi of the Forest)

[22] [Ellis, The Ewe-speaking Peoples, pp. 71-74. Cf. p. 354, category 116.--Analyst]

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776 [822] [971]

strong, he is a man-eater; constant reference is made to his mortar in which he grinds people. His ritual color is white; some people believe that his skin is also white. The grinding of a person in a mortar is an African symbolism. A bas-relief in Dahomey reported by Gorer[24] shows King Glele pounding a vanquished king's head in a mortar.

Bobu Trois Cornes

Bobu Yèmain

Bobu Swi Yèmain Yèmain

Dada Ézilie

Ézilie Boucan

Ézilie Un Main Un Pied Un Jé (Ézilie One Hand, One Foot, One Eye)

Ézilie Balianne

Ézilie Dankéké

Ézilie Jérouge (Ézilie Red Eyes). A malevolent spirit.[25]

Ézilie Maphonne, or Maphongle. A malevolent spirit.

Ézilie Femme Pétro

Ézilie Acoupi

Grand Assonglo

Jean Pierre Pounguié

Limba Zão. A deity of Congo origin.

Damballa Laflambeau

Mait' Pimba. Said to be father of Zão Pimba.

Mambo Ayida (Priestess Ayida). A Pétro version of the Vodoun Ayida.

Marinette Congo. A malevolent female loa.

Marinette Pied Chêche (Marinette Dry Feet). Sister to Marinette Bras Chêche, and equally malevolent.

Ogoun Jérouge (Ogoun Red Eyes). A malevolent spirit. A Pétro form of the Vodoun deity, with a different character.

Ogoun Dleau (Ogoun of the Water). Brother of Ogoun Jérouge.

Ogoun Laflambeau. A fire loa. When he comes in he plays with hot coals, hot iron, and flames.

Ogoun Pétro. He is malevolent and "eats" men.

Pimba, or Pemba

Quançon Fer (Iron Pants)

Kitta Banda (Chic Kitta)

Kitta Bayè (Kitta of the Gate). A gateway guardian.

Kitta Congo

Kitta Kanga

Kitta Legba. Possibly the same as Kitta Bayè.

Racine

Rigal. A brother to Général Brisé. A benevolent loa.

Roi Grand Chimin (King of the Highway). May refer to Legba or to another highway loa.

Sililibwo Boquomé

Taureau Pétro. A Pétro version of the Vodoun Taureau.

Tijean Pétro. A malevolent loa who preys on children from the foliage of the coconut palm.

Tijean Pied Fin (Tijean No Feet). Brother to Tijean Pétro.

[24] [Gorer, Africa Dances, P. 188. Cf. P. 354, Cat. 116. --Analyst]

[25] [For footnote, see Cat. 116, P. 354. --Analyst]